

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 NAIROBI 7183/1

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, UNEP

SUBJ: UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL VI - PLENARY STATEMENT

FOLLOWING IS PLENARY STATEMENT OF UN REPRESENTATIVE TO
UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL VI CHARLES WARREN, CHAIRMAN,
COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY, DELIVERED AT AFTERNOON
SESSION MAY 10:

QUOTE

MR. PRESIDENT, ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED STATES DELEGATION
MAY I CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR ELECTION AS WELL AS THE OTHER
OFFICERS WHO WILL BE SUPPORTING YOU THROUGHOUT THIS SESSION.
YOU HAVE THE FULL COOPERATION OF THE U.S. DELEGATION IN YOU
EFFORTS TO MAKE THIS A FRUITFUL AND PRODUCTIVE GOVERNMENT COUNCIL
SESSION.

AS CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND
ADVISER TO PRESIDENT CARTER ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY, IT IS MY
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RESPONSIBILITY TO HELP ARTICULATE AND DEVELOP ENVIRONMENTAL
PROGRAMS OF THE UNITED STATES. THERE ARE TWO TENETS OF THIS
POLICY THAT ARE PARTICULARLY PERTINENT TO UNEP'S PROGRAM. THEY
ARE:

-- INTELLIGENT STEWARDSHIP OF THE ENVIRONMENT IS A PRIME
RESPONSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT, AND

-- SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH DEPENDS UPON A HEALTHY,
SOUND ENVIRONMENT.

IN MY COUNTRY AND ELSEWHERE, WE ARE SLOW TO COME TO GRIPS WITH
CERTAIN BASIC TRUTHS:

-- OUR RAPIDLY INCREASING NUMBERS AND RESOURCE DEMANDS HAVE
PLACED US IN A NEW AND DANGEROUS RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR
ENVIRONMENT; AND
-- NATURE ITSELF MAKES SOME DECISIONS DIFFICULT TO ANTICIPATE
AND SOMETIMES IMPOSSIBLE TO CONTROL.

IT WAS IN RESPONSE TO SUCH BASIC CONCERNS AS THESE THAT
PRESIDENT CARTER DIRECTED A STUDY OF PROBABLY CHANGES IN THE
WORLD'S POPULATION, NATURAL RESOURCE DEMANDS AND ENVIRONMENT THROUGH
THE END OF THE CENTURY AS A FOUNDATION FOR LONG-TERM PLANNING.
WHAT WE CALL THE GLOBAL 2000 STUDY IS SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION AND
RELEASE SOON.

THE STUDY'S MESSAGE AS WE ENTER THE NEXT CENTURY, NOW ONLY
ABOUT TWO DECADES AWAY, IS NOT ENCOURAGING. IF PRESENT POLICIES
AND TRENDS CONTINUE WITHOUT MAJOR CHANGE, THERE WILL BE ONLY MODEST,
IF ANY GLOBAL IMPROVEMENT IN HUMAN WELFARE. FURTHERMORE, EFFORTS
TO MEET HUMAN NEEDS BETWEEN NOW AND THE YEAR 2000 HAVE THE POTENTIAL
FOR DAMAGING THE ENVIRONMENT TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT THE EARTH'S
PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY TO MEET EVEN BASIC HUMAN NEEDS IN THE EARLY 21ST
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CENTURY MAY BE JEOPARDIZED. THE KEY PHRASE HERE IS "IF PRESENT
POLICIES AND TRENDS CONTINUE WITHOUT MAJOR CHANGE." OUR HOPE MUST
BE THAT APPROPRIATE CHANGES WILL BE MADE IN RESPONSE TO SUCH
FORECASTS.

LOOKING A BIT FURTHER INTO POTENTIAL DAMAGE TO THE ENVIRON-
MENT, I WOULD LIKE TO FOCUS ON THE PROJECTIONS FOR SEVERAL AREAS
THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO UNEP'S PROGRAMS.

FIRST: THE AVAILABILITY AND QUALITY OF WATER ARE EXPECTED
TO DETERIORATE CONSIDERABLY IN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOP-
ING COUNTRIES ALIKE.

SECOND: THE WORLD WILL LOSE ONE-THIRD OF ITS AGRICULTURAL
LANDS TO DESERTIFICATION BY THE YEAR 2000.

THIRD: THERE WILL BE A VIRTUAL EXHAUSTION OF TROPICAL FORESTS
DUE TO SLASH AND BURN AGRICULTURE, CUTTING FOR
GRAZING AND CROP LAND, AND THE DEMAND FOR FIREWOOD,
CHARCOAL AND LUMBER. THE POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES
OF THIS RAPID DEPLETION ARE DESERTIFICATION, SOIL
EROSION, CLIMATE ALTERATION, AND LOSS OF GENETIC

DIVERSITY.

THERE HAVE BEEN TWO MAJOR UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCES FOCUSING WORLD ATTENTION ON THE DETERIORATION OF WATER AND SOILS. THESE CONFERENCES RECOMMENDED COURSES OF ACTION AS WELL AS MECHANISMS AND PROGRAMS THROUGH WHICH GOVERNMENTS CAN SEEK SOLUTIONS.

TROPICAL DEFORESTATION, HOWEVER, IS BECOMING AN INCREASINGLY SERIOUS PROBLEM. SOME SCIENTISTS BELIEVE THAT THESE HIGHLY COMPLEX AND FRAGILE FOREST ECOSYSTEMS PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN THE REGULATION OF THE EARTH'S BIOSPHERE. CERTAINLY, THEY PLAY A ROLE IN THE HEALTH OF THE ECOSYSTEM OF NATIONS IN WHICH THEY ARE LOCATED. TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS PROBLEM, NEXT MONTH A MEETING OF U.S. EXPERTS ON TROPICAL FORESTS WILL BE HELD. AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE UNCLASSIFIED

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MEETING WILL GIVE US A BETTER SENSE OF DIRECTION FOR OUR DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS. WE BELIEVE THAT THE DEPLETION OF THE WORLD'S TROPICAL FORESTS IS A PHENOMENON THAT REQUIRES GLOBAL ATTENTION, AND STUDY. THERE IS DEFINITELY THE NEED TO MOVE THIS SERIOUS PROBLEM FROM ACADEMIC CONCERN TO THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT LEVELS OF GOVERNMENTS. PROMOTION OF SUCH EFFORTS ARE WELL WITHIN UNEP'S CATALYTIC AND COORDINATION ROLE.

AS I OBSERVED EARLIER, A MAJOR CAUSE OF TROPICAL DEFORESTATION IS THE INCREASING DEMAND FOR FIREWOOD AND CHARCOAL TO ACCOMMODATE THE BASIC ENERGY NEEDS OF A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF THE WORLD'S PEOPLE. UNABLE TO AFFORD HIGH PRICED FOSSIL FUELS OR EXPENSIVE ELECTRIC POWER GENERATING SYSTEMS, THEY ARE FORCED TO DEPEND UPON WOOD PRODUCTS FOR COOKING AND WARMTH.

ONE INCREASINGLY ATTRACTIVE SOLUTION TO THIS RESOURCE DILEMMA IS THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOLAR AND OTHER RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES. A RECENT REPORT PUBLISHED BY THE WORLDWATCH INSTITUTE REACHED THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS: DEVELOPING COUNTRIES MAY ENTER THE SOLAR ERA BEFORE THE INDUSTRIALIZED WORLD DOES. BY AND LARGE, USCH NATIONS TEND TO BE MORE RICHLY ENDOWED WITH SUNLIGHT, AND THEIR POPULATIONS TEND TO REMAIN DISPERSED ENOUGH TO FACILITATE SMALL SCALE, DECENTRALIZED ENERGY PROJECTION. THESE ADVANTAGES, PLUS THE HIGH COST OF CONVENTIONAL ENERGY, MAKE SOLAR OPTIONS ECONOMICALLY COMPETITIVE. AND, FAR FROM BEING EXOTIC PROTOTYPES, MANY SOLAR DEVICES, ESPECIALLY FOR HEATING, COOKING AND PUMPING, HAVE ALREADY PROVEN THEMSELVES SIMPLE AND PRACTICAL.

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UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 NAIROBI 7183/2

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SUBJ: UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL VI - PLENARY STATEMENT

A SUCCESSFUL SOLAR AND RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCE TRANSITION WILL CLEARLY REQUIRE DETAILED KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ENERGY AVAILABILITY, NEEDS, AND SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES -- INFORMATION THAT DOES NOT NOW EXIST. UNFORTUNATELY, MOST OF THE SOLAR DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS ARE TAKING PLACE IN DEVELOPED NATIONS. THERE IS A NEED FOR MORE INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO INITIATE AND PROMOTE APPLICATION OF SOLAR AND OTHER RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. THE UNITED STATES SUGGESTS THAT UNEP, ONCE MORE IN ITS CATALYTIC AND COORDINATING ROLE, COULD EXPAND ITS ACTIVITIES IN THE AREA OF NON-CONVENTIONAL, ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND ENERGY SOURCES.

MANY OF YOU HAVE THE UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY OF INTEGRATING THE BEST AVAILABLE ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY INTO YOUR PRODUCTION PROCESSES. THESE CHEAPER AND MORE EFFECTIVE AVENUES WERE NOT AVAILABLE TO US DURING OUR DEVELOPING YEARS. THE TECHNOLOGY DID
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NOT THEN EXIST. MOREOVER, WE WERE BLISSFULLY UNQAWARE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES TO COME, AND WE ARE PAYING FOR IT NOW. FOR THE DECADE 1976-1985, OUR ESTIMATES OF SUCH PUBLIC AND PROVATE SPENDING TOTALS OVER \$550 BILLION, WITH THE ANNUAL OUTLAYS RISING FROM \$34 BILLION IN 1976 TO \$75 BILLION IN 1985. THESE EXPENDITURES COVER OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE AS WELL AS CAPITAL COSTS OF CONTROLLING AIR, WATER, AND NOISE POLLUTION, OF SAFELY

HANDLING SOLID AND RADIOACTIVE WASTES AND TOXIC SUBSTANCES, AND OF RECLAMATION OF STRIP MINED LAND.

ALL TOO OFTEN ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES ARE SEEN IN CONFLICT. OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE IS ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EFFECTIVE AND PRACTICAL PROCESS FOR FACTORING ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS INTO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION. WE KNOW THAT A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES ATTENDING THIS MEETING HAVE INSTALLED SUCH PROCESSES. WE ARE PLEASED TO HEAR THAT OUR HOST, THE GOVERNMENT OF KENYA, IS CONSIDERING ESTABLISHING GUIDELINES FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENTS PROJECTS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES.

UNEP'S SUPPORT OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT IS DEMONSTRATED BY DR. TOLBA'S STATED GOAL OF ACHIEVING TESTED GUIDELINES AND METHODOLOGIES FOR THE INTEGRATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS INTO NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PLANNING PROCESSES. THE UNITED STATES ENDORSES UNEP EFFORTS IN THIS IMPORTANT AREA AND LOOKS FORWARD TO A CONTINUING STRENGTH OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE FORM OF ESTABLISHED AND MEANINGFUL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESSES.

THERE IS ANOTHER SIDE OF THIS COIN THAT DESERVES CONTINUED AND INCREASED ATTENTION BY UNEP AND ITS MEMBERS -- THAT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF NATIONS FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR ACTIONS OUTSIDE THEIR OWN TERRITORY. IN THE UNITED STATES WE ARE WORKING ON PROCEDURES THAT WILL MEET THIS RESPONSIBILITY

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IN WAYS THAT ARE COMPATIBLE WITH OUR FOREIGN RELATIONS, TRADE, AND ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES. FOR EXAMPLE, THE AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT HAS

ESTABLISHED METHODS FOR INTEGRATING ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS INTO ITS DECISION PROCESS.

HOWEVER, MOST OF US HAVE YET TO ESTABLISH ACCEPTABLE GUIDELINES THAT ALLOW A SMOOTH FLOW OF INFORMATION AND CONSULTATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES AND ALTERNATIVE COURSES OF ACTION. LAST YEAR'S SESSION OF THIS GOVERNING COUNCIL, AT THE SUGGESTION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF KENYA, URGED COUNTRIES EXPORTING POTENTIALLY HARMFUL CHEMICALS BANNED IN THEIR TERRITORIES TO PROVIDE IMPORTING NATIONS INFORMATION AND SEEK THEIR CONSENT AND REQUESTED UNEP AND OTHER UN AGENCIES TO ASSIST IN STRENGTHENING THE CAPABILITIES OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO EVALUATE CHEMICALS, FOOD, DRUGS, AND COSMETICS. THERE IS NEED TO IMPROVE THE MECHANISM THROUGH WHICH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES CAN QUICKLY OBTAIN USEFUL INFORMATION AND DATA ON THESE CHEMICALS AND THEIR REGULATIONS. THE INTERNATIONAL REGISTER FOR POTENTIALLY TOXIC CHEMICALS SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED SO THAT IT CAN ACCOMPLISH THIS.

MR. PRESIDENT, I HAVE MENTIONED ONLY A FEW UNEP PROGRAM

ACTIVITIES. WE WILL HAVE SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT LATER. WE WILL ALSO BE ADDRESSING THE PROGRAM IN MORE DETAIL IN COMMITTEE I.

I WOULD BE REMISS, HOWEVER, IF I DID NOT NOTE IN CLOSING THAT WE HAVE SEEN CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS TOWARD INTEGRATED PROGRAMS IN MANY OF UNEP'S AREAS OF ACTIVITY. A PARTICULARLY SUCCESSFUL RECENT EXAMPLE IS THE WORK DONE BY UN AGENCIES AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS, IN COOPERATION WITH UNEP, TO DEVELOP A WORLD PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE OZONE DEPLETION PROBLEM. THE REGIONAL SEAS PROGRAM IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE. WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING TO STRENGTHEN AND EXTEND THE CONCEPT OF INTEGRATED PLANNING IN THOSE PROGRAM AREAS WHERE IT APPEARS TO BE LACKING. WE WILL ALSO WANT TO ADDRESS THE SUBSTANCE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S 21 GOALS.

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WE SEE AND WELCOME AN IMPROVED SPIRIT OF COOPERATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS WITHIN THE UN SYSTEM. THIS DELEGATION WILL WANT TO WORK CLOSELY WITH OUR DISTINGUISHED COLLEAGUES TO ENSURE THE MAINTENANCE OF THE SPIRIT WHICH IS KEY TO THE SUCCESS OF THE IMPORTANT CONCEPT OF JOINT PROGRAMMING. THIS CONCEPT WILL ONLY SUCCEED IF IT IS DEVELOPED COOPERATIVELY, TO THE BENEFIT OF THE ENTIRE SYSTEM, WITH FULL RECOGNITION OF THE MISSIONS OF EACH OF THE ENTITIES INVOLVED.

23, OF COURSE, MUST SUPPORT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DECISION TO MERGE THE ECB INTO THE ACC. HOWEVER WE WISH TO HAVE THE BENEFIT OF COORDINATION PREVIOUSLY UNDERTAKEN BY THE ECB. CONSEQUENTLY WE BELIEVE THAT THE GOVERNING COUNCIL SHOULD RECOMMEND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ENVIRONMENT SUBCOMMITTEE WITHIN THE ACC TO MEET ALL THE CONCERNS DR. TOLBA MENTIONED IN HIS INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT.

THANK YOU, MR. PRESIDENT.

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